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Rep. Henry A. Waxman

Armenian Genocide

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Mr. Speaker. Today we solemnly commemorate the 98th anniversary of the Armenian genocide. Over the course of eight years, the Armenian Christian population was systematically terrorized, murdered, and driven out of their country. In 1914, two million Armenians were living under the Ottoman Empire; by 1922, only 388,000 remained. Today we remember the victims of these atrocities and vow that their suffering will not be forgotten.

The horror of the Armenian Genocide was surpassed only by the silence that followed it. To this day, the Turkish government prohibits recognition of its predecessor's dark history, and has pressured others to adhere to

the same base standard. The United States has a moral obligation to acknowledge the horrors of the past, just as we must recognize all genocides as crimes against humanity. Recognition of the Armenian Genocide is long overdue.

As a member of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues, I hope that my colleagues will join me in paying solemn tribute to those who lost their lives and those who have survived such terrible atrocities. Let us stand up to governments that persecute their people, and reaffirm our commitment to the victims of injustice.